

the place of refuge for many thousands of fugitives from bondage. The lone north star was the cynosure of their watching eyes. On many a midnight march it guided their footsteps till they reached our shores. It is estimated that more than 30,000 negro slaves found freedom in Canada. These were helped on their way to the land of liberty by a philanthropic organization known as the Underground Railway. Of this organization, of its methods, its results, and some of its principal agents, we purpose in this paper to give some account.

From the nature of the case the operations of the "Underground Railway" had to be conducted in secret. Few details of its work were placed on record. Its agents for very practical reasons "did good by stealth and blushed to find it fame." They lived in an atmosphere of suspicion and espionage. When discovered they were marked men, exposed to punishment by the law, and were subject to extra judicial disabilities, annoyance and persecution, and were sometimes done to death as martyrs of liberty. The literature of the subject is therefore meagre. It is scattered through reports of legal trials, newspaper and magazine articles and a number of books and sketches, reminiscence and biography. A few Underground Railway agents were indiscreet enough to commit to writing the record of their operations, some of which, for a time preserved, it was found necessary to destroy. Nevertheless, a number of works have been compiled on this subject.

The most considerable of these is Still's "Underground Railway Records," a large volume of 780 pages, which appeared in 1872 and a second edition in 1883. Mr. Still for some years before the war took an active part in the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, and had much personal intercourse with the fugitives whom he harboured and helped to Canada. Levi Coffin, an apostle of abolition, a distinguished member of an uncompromising anti-slavery family, has written a large volume of reminiscences of the stirring events in which he was so prominent. Theodore Parker, of Boston, an active abolitionist, made a large collection of manuscript and printed documents on this subject which is now in possession of the Boston Public Library.

That philanthropic Canadian, Dr. Alexander M. Ross, who bore a brave part in aiding the escape of fugitives, has in his "Recollection and Experiences of an Abolitionist," recorded many stirring

nated part of a state, the people whereof should then be in rebellion, should be then, thenceforward, and forever free." It was not, indeed, till June 23rd, 1864, that all laws for the rendition of slaves to their masters were repealed, and on January 31st, 1865, by a constitutional amendment, slavery was formally abolished throughout the entire Union, and the fourteenth amendment of the constitution absolutely forbade compensation being made either by the United States or by any state.